

REMARKS

The claims are rejected in view of U.S. Patent 5,511,122 (Atkinson). Reconsideration of the rejection in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is requested.

Claim 1 is amended to recite that the authentication apparatus is positioned “outside said interconnecting unit”. Claim 1 is further amended to recite that the authentication information stored by the recording device is “initially acquired by said interconnecting device and then transmitted to said authentication apparatus to perform authentication”. This amendment is supported by the paragraphs 28 and 45 of the application.

The authentication apparatus 40 is positioned outside interconnecting device 10a as seen in Figure 1. The authentication information on recording device (e.g., 15a, 15b) is first acquired by the interconnecting device (e.g., 10a, 10b). The authentication information is then transmitted from the interconnecting device 10a to the authentication apparatus 40 to perform authentication. This process is performed in accordance with the techniques disclosed in connection with Figure 5 and in its accompanying description in the specification.

Initially, interconnecting device (e.g., 10a or 10b) acquires authentication information of a user from an external recording device (e.g., 15a or 15b). Next, the first interconnecting device (e.g., 10a or 10b) transmits the authentication information to an authentication apparatus (e.g., a second interconnecting device 40) positioned outside interconnecting device 10a. Next, the authentication apparatus 40 receives the authentication information and performs authentication. Finally, the authentication apparatus 40 controls whether communication between the first and second networks is allowed. Amended claim 1 requires that the authentication apparatus be “outside said interconnecting device” and that the authentication information be “initially acquired by said interconnecting device and then transmitted to said authentication apparatus to perform authentication” as illustrated by the process in Figure 5.

Claims 1-3 are also amended to omit “first” before interconnecting device and before communication device for clarification purposes.

With regard to claim 1, the system of Atkinson fails to disclose an interconnecting device, which first acquires authentication information stored in an external recording device and then transmits authentication information to an authentication apparatus to perform

authentication. Additionally, Atkinson fails to disclose an interconnecting device (e.g. 10a) comprising an acquiring unit (e.g. 102) operable to acquire authentication information from an external recording device (e.g. 15a). Atkinson also fails to disclose an interconnecting device (e.g. 10a) comprising a transmit unit (e.g. 108) operable to transmit authentication information to an authentication apparatus (e.g. 40).

Thus, amended claim 1 should be in a condition for allowance. Claims 2-3 are dependent upon claim 1 and therefore should also be in a condition for allowance. Independent claim 4 is amended to include the limitations added to claim 1. Therefore, claim 4 and its dependent claims 5-12 should also be in a condition for allowance. Similarly, independent claim 13 is amended to include limitations of the type added to claim 1. Therefore, claim 13 and its dependent claims 14-18 should also be in a condition for allowance.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that all the claims are not anticipated by Atkinson and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of these claims. If there are any residual issues that need to be resolved prior to allowing the application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned.

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